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## FALL MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS

The 43<sup>rd</sup> annual **NCHS Fall Conference and General Meeting** will again be held **virtually, via Zoom**, on **Saturday, 6 November 2021**.

We had planned to resume an in-person format for this meeting in our usual meeting place (room 101 David Clark Labs on the campus of North Carolina State University in Raleigh), but the difficult and disappointing decision to continue with a virtual format was made unanimously by Executive Council vote, considering resurgence of the Delta variant of COVID-19 and resulting meeting facility restrictions (e.g., masking requirements and prohibition of refreshments). The theme was originally set to be **“Ethics in Herpetology,”** and although the agenda needed to be considerably abbreviated to accommodate the virtual format, we will still have a couple of presentations in line with that topic (see agenda, p. 18).

**SIGN-IN:** There is no registration fee or membership requirement for this meeting; it is free and open to all.

**Zoom link:**

<https://nashcc-edu.zoom.us/j/93193086638>

### SPEAKERS

**Philip Gould** is a Ph.D. candidate in the lab of Dr. Bill Peterman at Ohio State University, where he has investigated the ecological role of stream salamanders in the southern Appalachians. His research has focused on identifying patterns in stream salamander abundance and co-occurrence; evaluating how black-bellied salamanders influence aquatic ecosystems through diet and nutrient recycling; and how wildfire effects salamander populations. Much of the work he has done for his dissertation was supported and based out of Highlands Biological Station, Highlands, NC between 2017 and 2020.

Hired in 2007 by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, **Jeff Hall** is the Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) Biologist. As PARC Biologist, Jeff works with landowners to promote habitat management that benefits reptiles and amphibians as well as other wildlife species. He coordinates the North Carolina chapter of PARC, helping to bring public and private partners together to further conservation efforts for reptiles and amphibians. Jeff also participates in field work on a variety of projects including rare amphibian monitoring and habitat restoration, upland snake conservation, and Project Bog Turtle. In addition, Hall manages the Calling Amphibian Survey Program (CASP), which is designed to monitor long-term trends of frog and toad populations across the state. Jeff, his wife Shannon, and sons Ben and Graham live in Greenville, NC.

**John Sealy** retired as a biology lecturer with the University of North Carolina Greensboro in 2015. John earned a B.A. from Elon College, a B.A. in Biology from UNCG, and an M.S. in Biology from Appalachian State University. A long-time member of NCHS, he has worked extensively with timber rattlesnakes for many years and his current research projects involve various aspects of conservation and management of timber rattlesnakes in North Carolina. Much of his focus in recent years has been in providing workshops and training to help agencies in developing management practices to assist timber rattlesnake populations.

### ABSTRACTS

#### Ethical Herp Projects from Concept to Reality

Jeffrey G. Hall

North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission

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When considering a project working with wildlife, biologists must consider a wide range of implications. Most often, we tend to focus on the interesting and positive results that might be discovered. However, to have an ethical project, other questions should be explored beyond the primary research hypothesis. Will the project negatively affect the habitat where I will be working? Will the species involved have significant negative repercussions, such as reduced fecundity or mortality? Have I obtained all the proper permits, licenses, and permissions to perform the work? And, perhaps most importantly, will the anticipated outcome of my project outweigh all other potential concerns? We'll explore these questions and consider what it takes to be ethical in the field of herpetology.

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## External Attachment of Transmitters with Adult Timber Rattlesnakes: A Search for Less Invasive Telemetry Methods

John B. Sealy III

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Radio telemetry is a powerful and invaluable tool in the study of free-ranging timber rattlesnakes. Prior to the availability of transmitter-battery packages sufficiently small in size and weight to make possible their use with snakes, many aspects of the life history and ecology of this extremely cryptic species remained unknown. For all its advantages, however, transmitter implants are not a benign methodology as there can be significant adverse effects associated with surgical implantations, ranging from inflammation and infections to death. Indications are telemetry, utilizing surgically implanted transmitters, is an overused study methodology too often in search of a valid conservation need. Here I present an effective, non-surgical transmitter attachment method which addresses many of the ethical issues surrounding surgical implants with a review of its effectiveness and limitations in a field study.

## Individual Size and Elevation Drive Cross-Ecosystem Foraging of a Semi-Aquatic Predator

Philip Gould

The Ohio State University

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Ecosystems often rely on processes that import nutrients produced elsewhere. Animals can facilitate the movement of nutrients if they move between different ecosystems or live at the margins of distinct habitat. In the Appalachians, forested streams rely on connections between upland forests and streams. There, salamanders likely have an important role in connecting upland and stream ecosystems. This presentation will delve into my research on how black-bellied salamanders connect stream and forest ecosystems through diet. The presentation will include results from recent work done in Macon County, supported by Highlands Biological Station and the North Carolina Herpetological Society.

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The annual **NCHS Photo Contest** will be a little different this year. After a hiatus from being the Photo Contest chairperson, I (David Cooper) have agreed to take on that role once again. In the past, I have heard gripes from a number of folks who think their photography skillz simply aren't good enough to compete with the likes of some of our amazing photographers in the Society. While I don't necessarily believe that, and I think anyone can improve with training and the right equipment, I am going to change things up a little to accommodate folks who may have non-photography creative skillz. This year, I'm going to try out accepting entries in a new category: Creative Writing. Please refer to the NCHS Photo & Creative Writing Contest announcement below for details regarding presentation of entries, judging, submittal requirements, the deadline for entry, and the fine print. Please contact David Cooper via e-mail ([photocontest@ncherps.org](mailto:photocontest@ncherps.org)) with any questions.

### PHOTO & CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST: Please read this carefully before submitting entries.

**Photography Category:** All photographs entered in the contest will be judged in the Photography category. Entries may be black-and-white, color, and/or may depict "herpers in action." Entries must be submitted in digital format (see below) and are limited to **six per entrant**. I personally don't care if the photos even have a herp in them. If you want your amazing macro photo of a golden dung fly on a steaming fresh cow pie to be shown in the photo contest presentation, send it to me and it'll go in there (there are some images that I won't show, of course—don't cross the line).



**Creative Writing Category:** All creative writing entries entered into the contest will be judged in the Creative Writing category. These can be short stories, poems, storyboards, plays, or any other creative writing that you have done. For this category, I envision amusing, amazing, wondrous, or otherwise awe-inspiring stories from the field or the laboratory, as well as witty herp-themed poems. Please limit creative writing entries to no more than 5 (five) typed pages at whatever font size, margins, and spacing you deem appropriate. Suggested: 11-point Calibri or SegoeUI, single spaced, 1-inch margins, but really, whatever you send me is fine for this first attempt at this category. Entries in this category must be submitted in digital format (Word or PDF) and are limited to **three per entrant**.



**Prizes:** No monetary prizes will be awarded by the photo contest committee, although your sense of accomplishment at having submitted an entry and helping to entertain the drooling masses of gathered herpetologists will be a prize in itself. Although we used to award prizes in the form of NCHS gift certificates, we're not going to do that this year. We may re-visit the idea of prizes (other than self-fulfillment) in the future, depending on how this year's contest goes. We will judge and announce first, second, and third place winners in each of the categories. Winners may or may not receive a certificate noting their accomplishment.

**Presentation of Entries:** A PowerPoint slide show of all eligible photography entries will be compiled by the Photo Contest chairperson. This slide show will be presented, and winners will be announced, at the fall NCHS meeting. Please refer to the meeting agenda for the time the entries will be shown. Depending on the number and length of creative writing entries, the winning entry or entries may be read aloud at the fall meeting. All creative writing entries will be printed, and winners announced, in the January newsletter. The three winning photography entries will also appear in the January newsletter.

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Judging: The judging will be performed by a qualified panel of no fewer than three judges appointed by the President and/or the Photo Contest committee. Judges will not be contest participants, nor will they have been party to the slide show compilation.

Submittal Requirements: The photo contest is open to any amateur **(1)** photographer who is a current member **(2)** of NCHS. The contest will again be in all-digital format. Digital images should be submitted as JPEGs. Resolution should be high enough to avoid pixilation when shown in the PowerPoint presentation. No modifications will be performed after the image is submitted, with the exception of sizing the images for optimal fit in the photo contest PowerPoint presentation. **Images submitted should be labeled with title, photographer's name, species, locality information, and the date the photo was taken.** Images may depict either wild or captive animals from any geographic location. Short story entries may be submitted by any member as either Word documents or PDFs. Entries are to be submitted via e-mail to: [photocontest@ncherps.org](mailto:photocontest@ncherps.org). Any questions may be directed to the photo contest chairperson at the above-listed e-mail address.

Deadline: All entries must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. on 23 October 2021 (the Saturday two weeks prior to the Fall Meeting). Mark your calendars. This will allow the photo contest committee time to compile and judge entries before the meeting. Entries will not be accepted after the deadline, including on the day of the meeting.

**The Fine Print:** By submitting an image or creative writing entry to the NCHS photo or creative writing contests, the entrant affirms that the media is his or her own work **(3)** and gives NCHS the right to present the work as part of the photo or creative writing contest presentation at the Fall Meeting and in the NCHS newsletter. Writing entries and low-resolution versions (not suitable for print) of winning photos may be included on the NCHS website. **(4)** Certain photos may be used in NCHS educational materials or for non-profit NCHS fund-raising purposes **(5)**.

**(1)** For the purposes of the NCHS photo contest, "professional photographer" is defined as a person who has ever made, in any given year, ten percent (10%) or more of his or her yearly income from the sale of photographs.

**(2)** Current members are defined as those members whose memberships have not expired yet. Entries from members whose memberships are currently expired will not be considered for judging until the membership is renewed.

**(3)** Media will not be accepted if the member submitting the media is not the actual creator.

**(4)** Photographer retains the right to disallow use of his or her photo on the NCHS website. Photographers wishing to exercise this right shall give notice by e-mail at the time photos are entered into the Contest. We won't even get mad at you.

**(5)** Photographer will be notified in writing prior to use of his or her photo by NCHS for educational or fund-raising purposes. Photographer will have the opportunity to refuse NCHS the right to use his or her photo.

**AUCTION AND RAFFLE** will once again have to wait until we can meet in person. 😞 Save up your money and bidding attitude—we will have some great items in store for the future (including beautiful Reptile Replicas by Joe Morgan and many items from the David L. Stephan estate)!

**REFRESHMENTS** might have looked something like this:



If we'd had them. Oh, well. Maybe next time . . .

Questions about the meeting? Please contact Dave Beamer, [dabeamer973@nashcc.edu](mailto:dabeamer973@nashcc.edu).



**ELECTIONS:** It is once again time to elect an NCHS **Vice-President** and **Secretary** (President and Treasurer will be elected next fall). Following are the candidates for two-year terms beginning 1 January 2022. Additional nominations will be accepted during the Fall Meeting business session. Ballots are included in this newsletter. A space for write-in candidates is included. Members may vote after nominations close during the Fall Meeting business session. **You can vote electronically** at <https://forms.gle/iWwDJRs7AjXBSzis6> or paper ballots may be mailed in. **Ballots must be received by 1 December 2021.** Individual members are allowed one vote each, and **family memberships** are also allowed **one vote per family**.

Also, be sure to cast your vote for NCHS **Member-of-the-Year** for 2021. A space is included on the ballot along with the candidates for office. Nominations should be based primarily on outstanding service or contributions to NCHS, but general contributions to the fields of herpetological research, conservation, or education may also be considered. Only current dues-paying members are eligible for nomination. Each membership is allowed one vote (family memberships are allowed one vote per family). The winner will receive a certificate and a year's free membership and will be announced in the January newsletter.

## CANDIDATES FOR NCHS OFFICERS (2022-2023)

### VICE-PRESIDENT

NAME: **David Beamer**

LOCATION: Spring Hope, NC.

PRESENT POSITION: Biology Instructor, Department of Natural Science, Nash Community College.

EDUCATION: B.S. Biology, Indiana University Northwest; M.S. Biology, East Carolina University; Ph.D. Interdisciplinary Program of Biological Science, East Carolina University.

INTERESTS: Integrating evolutionary and ecological approaches to elucidate the factors responsible for the diversification and distribution of salamander lineages; mentoring undergraduate students in science (especially underrepresented groups in science).

SERVICE: Current Vice-President (2020-2021) seeking re-election. Member since 2006; 2015 candidate for Vice-President; speaker at spring 2008, spring 2009, spring 2010, fall 2014, and spring 2017 meetings; NCHS grant recipient, 2007; co-led workshop and field trip for 2014 NCPARC meeting; has participated in field trips and bio-blitzes.

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN: "If re-elected, I will continue to try my best to find good speakers for our spring and fall meetings."



### SECRETARY

NAME: **David Cooper**

LOCATION: Cary, NC.

PRESENT POSITION: Senior Environmental Scientist, VHB, Raleigh, NC.

EDUCATION: B.S. Zoology, North Carolina State University (1999).

INTERESTS: Natural history, conservation, stewardship, field observations, photography, education, husbandry, critters and vegetables in general.

SERVICE: Enough to know better, but a glutton for punishment. Member since ca. 1989; Treasurer, 2003-2004; Assistant Treasurer, 2005-2006; President, 2012-2015; Photo Contest Committee chair (current, and on and off since 2004); active in Stewardship Committee; participated in and helped lead numerous NCHS field trips; speaker at 2016 Fall Meeting; has contributed material to newsletter; donated items to and assisted with auctions; assisted with setup, cleanup, and other tasks at numerous meetings; assisted with Project Bog Turtle and Project Simus; co-recipient of an NCHS grant to study chytrid fungus in NC; co-recipient of two NCHS grants to study the Granville County timber rattlesnake population; produced "Venomous Snakes of NC" poster; donated photographic images for various NCHS uses; voted "Member-of-the-Year," 2003; has contributed to herpetological collections at NC State Museum and to general herpetology of NC; active in NCPARC.

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN: "Detail-oriented, but concise."



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NAME: **Megan Serr**

LOCATION: Raleigh, NC.

PRESENT POSITION: Lecturer in Zoology, North Carolina State University.

EDUCATION: B.Sc. Biology, California State University, San Bernardino; M.Sc. Zoology, University of Nebraska, Ph.D. Zoology, North Carolina State University.

INTERESTS: Biological conservation, invasive species, toxicology, animal behavior, and reproduction. For both undergraduate and master's degrees, worked with amphibians. A science educator who loves doing outreach events.

SERVICE: Current Secretary (2016-2021), seeking re-election. Member since 2010; served on Nominating Committee, 2014; has given many educational outreach presentations, participated in NCHS field trips, contributed material to newsletter, hosted Zoom meetings, and donated auction items.

CAMPAIGN SLOGAN: "Just let me check that log again."



Nominating Committee: Jeff Beane

## THE NORTH CAROLINA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Announces

### 43<sup>rd</sup> annual Fall Conference and General Meeting and third-ever virtual meeting!



Saturday, November 6, 2021



Zoom Link: <https://nashcc-edu.zoom.us/j/93193086638>



### AGENDA

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 9:00 – 9:15 a.m.        | Sign-in and Welcome   |
| 9:15 – 9:45 a.m.        | <b>Ethical Herp Projects from Concept to Reality.</b> Jeff Hall, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission                           |
| 9:45 – 10:00 a.m.       | Break and socialize   |
| 10:00 – 10:30 a.m.      | <b>External Attachment of Transmitters with Adult Timber Rattlesnakes: A Search for Less Invasive Telemetry Methods.</b> John Sealy     |
| 10:30 – 10:45 a.m.      | Break and socialize   |
| 10:45 – 11:15 a.m.      | <b>Individual Size and Elevation Drive Cross-Ecosystem Foraging of a Semi-Aquatic Predator.</b> Philip Gould, The Ohio State University |
| 11:15 – 11:30 a.m.      | Break and socialize   |
| 11:30 – 11:45 a.m.      | NC Herpetology Hall of Fame   |
| 11:45 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. | Photo & Creative Writing Contest  |
| 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.       | Business Session  |

